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Presidio Trust

DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

an updated plan for Area B of the Presidio of San Francisco

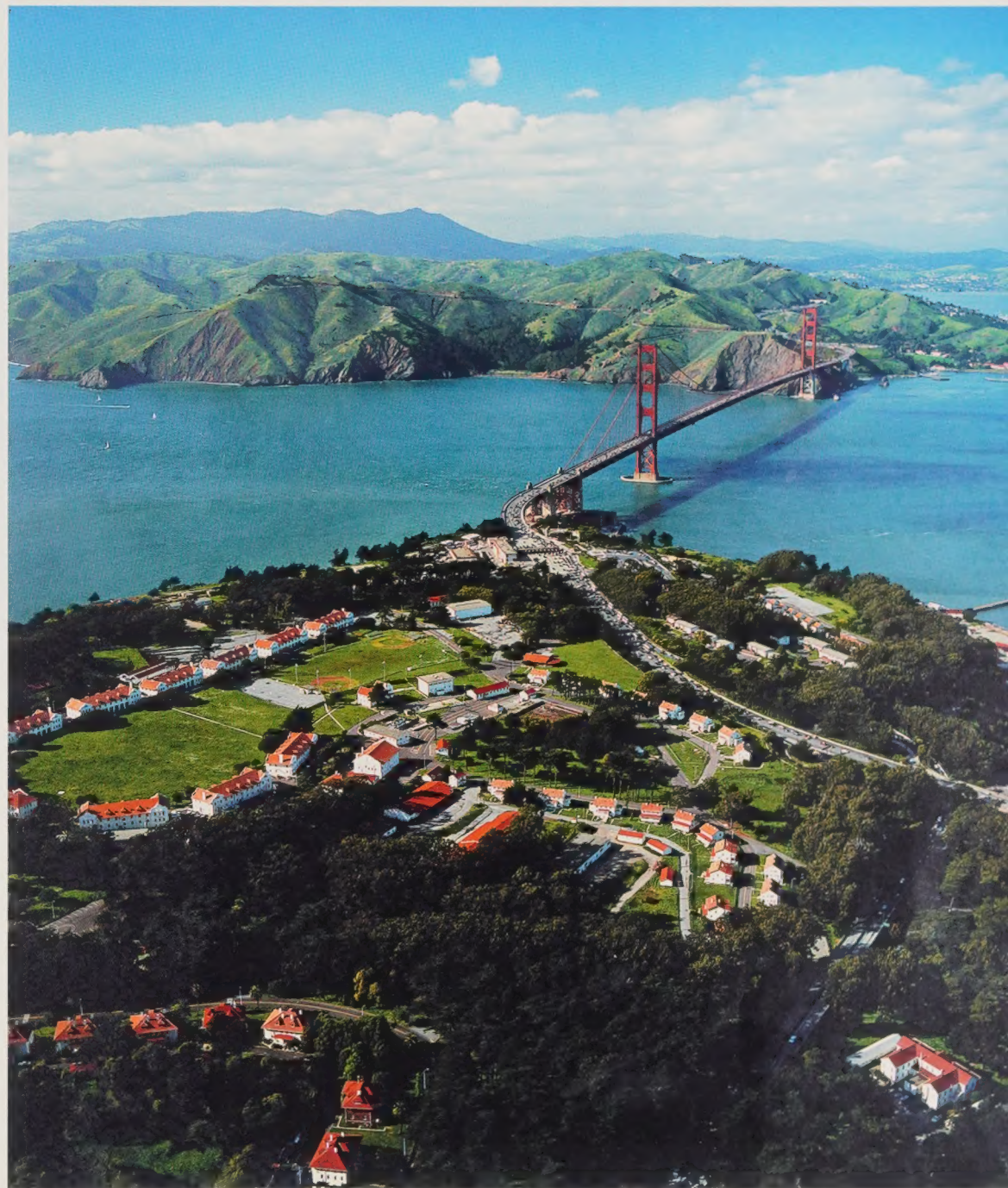
JULY 2001

THROUGH THIS PLAN, THE PRESIDIO TRUST OFFERS THE FOLLOWING ASSURANCES TO THE COMMUNITY:

- *The Presidio will remain an open space haven with its natural, historic, scenic, cultural, and recreational resources preserved for public use and enjoyment.*
- *Open space and natural habitats will be preserved, enhanced, and increased in size.*
- *The Presidio Trust Act requires that future total building area not exceed the 5.96 million square feet in existence today. The Presidio Trust will seek to reduce this total building area to 5.6 million square feet.*
- *The historic planted forest will be rehabilitated, wetlands enhanced, and native plant and wildlife species protected.*
- *The Presidio's National Landmark status will be preserved; any changes within the landmark district will be in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act and in keeping with the park's setting.*
- *Construction will be limited to existing areas of development, and the size of new buildings will be compatible with those of nearby structures.*
- *The Presidio Trust will use sustainable design practices and promote energy and water conservation, waste reduction and recycling, and clean technologies.*
- *The Presidio Trust will discourage and reduce automobile use and promote walking, biking, public transit, and internal shuttle use.*
- *Presidio tenants will be selected for their responsiveness to park program themes and contribution to the visitor experience, their conformance with PTIP planning principles and guidelines, and their ability to contribute to the Presidio's financial sustainability.*
- *Public input will continue to be a valued component of planning for the Presidio's future as changes occur over time.*

A Vision for the Future

THE PRESIDIO IS UNIQUE. No other national park can claim so strategic and dramatic a setting as this site at the Golden Gate, bounded by a great city and its residential neighborhoods on two sides, high bluffs overlooking the vast ocean on the west, and an open bay on the north. Nor does any other park contain such a vast collection of military buildings and landscapes, as well as important native plants, wildlife and natural systems, all amidst a thriving international urban center. The park's magnificent natural setting, its distinctive military architecture, and the resulting environment all bear testimony to the site's rich history, and determine the first and most important priority for the Presidio Trust: to protect and preserve the park's unique resources for the future.



Aerial view of Fort Scott

A Vision for the Future

With such a rich range of built and natural resources, the Presidio is expensive to operate and maintain. The large number of buildings and the improvements and services required by their occupants – roads and sewers and landscape protection as well as rehabilitation and upkeep of the buildings themselves – make the Presidio among the most expensive sites in the national

park system. Congress has directed that this large expense be covered from revenues generated by the park itself and that the Presidio Trust achieve financial self-sufficiency by 2013. This Congressional mandate creates the second critical priority for the Presidio Trust: to ensure the financial solvency that will enable the protection and enhancement of park resources and provision of Presidio programs.

The Presidio Trust Implementation Plan (“PTIP” or “Plan”) is the product of extensive community consultation and the Presidio Trust’s three years of experience. The PTIP sets the broad criteria the Trust will apply in making decisions about the built and natural environments, programmatic services appropriate to this unique park, and tenant selection.

The existing configuration of development at the Presidio will determine much about the location and concentration of activities. The overall balance between buildings and open space will be maintained. The northeast quadrant, containing the imposing non-historic buildings of the former Letterman Army Medical Center and Letterman Army Institute of Research, will be home to a major new complex of buildings and open space designed by some of the nation’s – and San Francisco’s – best designers and occupied by one of this region’s most creative and innovative enterprises. To complement the diverse tenants on the site, the PTIP allows for one or more museums located at a site (or sites) to be determined, possibly occupying or replacing an existing large structure. The Plan also provides for a new institution designed to stimulate research and exchange of information in



Aloha Festival, 2000

A Vision for the Future



Main Post and Infantry Terrace

such areas as science and technology and their application to environmental problems and contribution to sustainable development. The PTIP also envisions a grouping of cultural uses showcasing the arts, as well as a residential community of those who work at the Presidio.

Each of these projects is intended to express distinctive creative energies and a diverse range of cultural, scientific, and economic achievements. The new facilities cited here are contemplated, but their realization and precise dimensions will depend, as much else in this Plan, on their economic feasibility.

An important objective of this Plan is to provide programs worthy of a great national park in an urban setting. This is one area, among many, in which the Presidio Trust is collaborating closely with the National Park Service. In providing for future programs, the PTIP recognizes that the Presidio is not a neighborhood park, or even a city park. Contributions to visitors' national park experience, together with contributions to meet the

Presidio's financial needs, will be among the important criteria in considering new tenants.

The Trust's proposed vision for the Presidio rejects the concept of a "freeze-dried" military base, in which no changes are permitted, in favor of a more dynamic community where programs and activities serve, inform, and educate visitors from near and far. Interpreting the park's history while also invigorating this new community will fulfill the Trust's mission and best realize the potential of one of America's newest great parks.

PLAN SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In 1972, Congress created the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) and included the Presidio of San Francisco army base within the GGNRA boundary. This act ensured that, if the military deemed the army base excess to its needs, jurisdiction over the Presidio would be transferred to the National Park Service (NPS). The Presidio army base was designated for closure in 1989, and in 1994 the Army transferred the Presidio to the NPS.

In 1996, Congress passed the Presidio Trust Act, transferring responsibility for managing the 1,168-acre inland area of the Presidio known as Area B to the Presidio Trust. The Presidio Trust manages the park in partnership with the National Park

Service. The Trust oversees Area B, approximately the interior 80 percent of the Presidio including nearly all of its historic structures; the NPS manages Area A, primarily the coastal areas.

The Presidio Trust Implementation Plan ("PTIP" or "Plan") is a comprehensive land use, transportation, and program plan for Area B of the Presidio. The PTIP is based on the General Management Plan Amendment for the Presidio (GMPA), the NPS plan for the entire Presidio (Areas A and B) that was adopted in 1994. The PTIP would become the Presidio Trust's management plan for Area B, while the GMPA would remain the management plan for Area A of the Presidio.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

Under the PTIP, the Presidio Trust would protect and preserve unique park resources for the future. A key goal of the PTIP is to provide for a reduction in the amount of building space that exists today within Area B. Today's 5.96 million square feet would be reduced by nearly 400,000 square feet over time to only 5.6 million. Historic buildings would, to the maximum extent feasible, be rehabilitated for new uses, with an eye toward careful stewardship and improvements that complement the character, scale, and arrangement of the historic setting. Open space in the southern part of the Presidio would increase with the removal of non-historic buildings. Here, land would be restored to allow for native plant restoration and habitat enhancement, and to provide a setting for passive and active visitor experiences and recreation.



Boundaries of Areas A & B

The Presidio would become a community of people living and working together. There would be no net loss of housing units from what exists today (1,650 units). Housing that is removed would be replaced, with first priority given to subdivision and conversion of existing building space for residential use. Limited new construction would be sited in areas with easy access to public transportation.

The Plan proposes a comprehensive transportation system designed to reduce automobile use and related congestion and encourage alternative means of transportation. An integrated circulation system would move people easily around the Presidio without use of automobiles. With expansion and improvement of bicycle and walking trails, as well as public transit services, many people would be able to reach their destinations within the park by walking, riding, biking, or using an internal shuttle.

The redesign of Doyle Drive, a long-term project subject to a separate planning process, would significantly change how visitors enter and experience the Presidio. The PTIP proposes that a reconfigured Doyle Drive serve the Presidio's land use needs by providing direct vehicle access to the park and by enhancing views from the Main Post to Crissy Field and the San Francisco Bay.



A contiguous expanse of parklands

 Area B Open Space Area	 Area A
 Area B Mixed-Use Area	 Area B Boundary

The PTIP sets forth land use preferences and development guidelines for the seven planning districts shown on Figure I on the following page. This approach rejects the idea that “one size fits all” for the park as a whole. Instead, it embraces the different challenges and opportunities found in each district while remaining consistent with overall planning principles.

PLAN SUMMARY



Figure I: Planning Districts, Existing Areas of Development, and Proposed Open Space

DISTRICT CONCEPTS

1 MAIN POST

Visitor and Community Center

The Main Post would be a focal point for the park's visitor and community-related activities, including cultural programs. The district's rich historic architecture would be preserved. The Main Post would host diverse uses including visitor amenities, small-scale retail, office, residential, and community support services. The historic parade ground would be re-established, and a variety of activities would bring other outdoor spaces to life.

2 CRISSY FIELD (AREA B)

Cultural and Recreational Destination

Area A of Crissy Field is a popular visitor destination; Area B of Crissy Field would complement the recently restored bayfront in Area A and be an extension of the Main Post's setting for cultural and community programs. The area south of Mason Street would feature services for visitors, including museums, other cultural and educational facilities, lodging, and bayfront recreation.

3 LETTERMAN

Mixed-Use Community

This district, adjacent to the Lombard and Gorgas Avenue gates, would house the Letterman Digital Arts Center, a new complex of buildings and open space to be occupied by one of the region's most creative and innovative enterprises. A blending of new and old, the Letterman district would be a tight-knit building complex of offices, some housing, and formal open spaces.

4 FORT SCOTT

Contemplative Campus

Fort Scott would be the "philosophical heart" of the Presidio, a contemplative setting for the pursuit of new solutions and technology for resource management and environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability. The predominant land uses would be educational, retreat, and conference facilities, with some lodging, offices, and housing.

5 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE HOSPITAL

Educational and Residential Area

The former Public Health Service Hospital would be a self-contained campus; preferred uses would include educational, institutional, or conference facilities and/or housing.

6 EAST HOUSING

Residential Community

The East Housing planning district, adjoining the Letterman district, would continue to be a primary residential area close to work sites. Some non-historic buildings may be removed and the Tennessee Hollow stream corridor would be restored. Some infill housing may be integrated with existing historic structures to create a pedestrian-scale, neighborhood environment.

7 SOUTH HILLS

Open Space and Recreation

The Plan proposes removal of a significant number of non-historic buildings and associated streets in this district to restore open space. This change would allow restoration of natural resources with enhancement of visitor access and recreational opportunities. Some residential uses would continue in this area.

PLAN SUMMARY

PROGRAMS

The Plan proposes programs worthy of a great national park in an urban area. These programs would transform the Presidio into an environment in which innovation and imagination are nurtured and new perspectives are explored. The Presidio would be a setting for community and public events, educational and learning centers, museums, exhibitions, youth-oriented and directed activities, hands-on demonstrations, resource stewardship activities, festivals, events, celebrations, and more. Together with partners such as the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, park tenants, schools, and cultural institutions, the Presidio Trust would provide a palette of program opportunities designed to create a compelling park experience for local, national, and international visitors.



Color Guard, Memorial Day, 2000

Situated at a western gateway to America, the Presidio is an ideal place from which to explore the American experience from a uniquely western perspective. Programs at the Presidio would provide the local, national, and international community with an unequalled venue for understanding the diverse cultural riches of the American West and the Pan-Pacific region and for telling the many stories that shed light on the shaping of America. These programs, using the latest communications technologies and maximizing interactive opportunities, would speak to the themes of exploration and opportunity, of mobility and innovation, of heritage and the arts.

The Presidio Trust would build upon National Park Service interpretive programs and provide leadership in enhancing the visitor experience through exhibitions, events, and cultural programs focused on broader aspects of the American experience, including those with a direct connection to Presidio resources. Subject to financial considerations, the Trust would provide many of the sites and buildings that would host Presidio interpretive programs. The Presidio Trust would also work closely with non-residential park tenants to coordinate their participation. For instance, the Trust would encourage tenants to install interpretive exhibits consistent with Trust program goals. In addition, the Trust would provide information about practices and activities that occur “behind the scenes,” including those that demonstrate the Presidio’s efforts to become a model sustainable community.

PLAN SUMMARY

The Presidio would continue to be home to museums and institutions that offer a uniquely western perspective on the American experience and bring new thinking to issues facing current and future generations. These institutions would explore broad themes related to the Presidio's strategic location at the Golden Gate. Programs that tie these broad themes to the specific history of the Presidio would encourage visitors to explore other areas of the park. Museum and interpretive programs would offer a robust mix of activities, lectures, discussions, exhibits, festivals, and celebrations.

The Presidio encompasses many special places that are appropriate settings for programs and events with meaningful associations for millions of Americans. The Main Post and Crissy Field would be the primary sites for hosting Presidio programs, in large part due to the unique built environment and open spaces found in these areas, as well as current visitor use patterns and ease of transit access. Smaller venues elsewhere in the Presidio may complement those at the Main Post and Crissy Field.

An enhanced sustainability program would demonstrate sustainable practices to local, national, and international visitors, educational institutions, interested organizations, and other land management agencies. This program would enable students and visitors to experience the full range of issues and activities that comprise the practice of sustainability.

There are few places in America like the Presidio, where the community plays such an important and integral role in the

management and stewardship of a park's natural resources. The Presidio Trust, in collaboration with the National Park Service and Golden Gate National Parks Association, would continue the commitment to providing and building volunteer-based stewardship programs. These programs would involve individual Presidio residents and people from the wider community. Schools, youth groups, and organizations would also have opportunities to participate in volunteer workdays and other stewardship efforts at the park. Outreach to underserved communities would be an important component of these programs.

To ensure dynamic and exciting Presidio programs, the Trust would provide leadership and oversight in program coordination and delivery. While tenants would be asked to collaborate with the Trust and the National Park Service in providing Presidio programs, only in some cases would they be the primary program providers. This change from the GMPA is proposed in order to ensure that a consistent and well-coordinated set of programs is provided for the public even as tenants may change over time. This approach would also help to prevent duplication in allocating scarce program resources.

The Presidio Trust would also seek out key cultural program partners to secure cultural and financial resources beyond those available through regular tenant organizations. This effort would involve not only those cultural organizations that seek a long-term presence at the Presidio, but also organizations interested in sponsoring, supporting, or undertaking special activities in support of the Presidio programs effort.

PLAN SUMMARY

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The PTIP sets forth lofty goals. Refining and realizing these goals would depend on their feasibility over time, and would involve additional public input and environmental review. The overall strategy for implementation of the Plan is to carry out individual projects that are consistent with the Plan concurrent with future planning activities. Certain projects would move forward immediately after the Plan is adopted; these mainly include (1) building rehabilitation and long-term leases involving no major changes in the built environment,

(2) natural resource enhancements, and (3) other stabilization, rehabilitation, and infrastructure improvement projects. For other projects, including those involving building demolition or replacement construction, the Trust would undertake more detailed planning consistent with the PTIP. These detailed planning efforts would include environmental review as well as opportunities for additional public involvement.

Future plans and projects would be prioritized based on the following factors:

- *The need to safeguard significant park resources.*
- *Compatibility with the Trust Act.*
- *Compatibility with preferred uses and planning principles articulated in PTIP.*
- *Potential contribution to the Trust's financial self-sufficiency as a national park.*

Rather than providing an exact blueprint for Area B, the PTIP proposes overall concepts for change, including principles governing the care and management of its varied resources, preferred land uses, and programs and activities that are appropriate in this national park setting. The Plan establishes planning principles and guidelines for future development and funding while building in the flexibility that would allow the Trust to respond to the social, environmental, and economic changes that will arise in the



Building 10, Funston Avenue

coming years. Flexibility is critical, as public sector funding for the Presidio Trust will end in 2013. This built-in flexibility and the related commitment to future planning efforts would ensure ongoing public participation in the future of the Presidio.

Substantial financial resources are needed to manage the Presidio for the long term. Through sound principles of financial and real estate management, the financial challenge can be met and the park can pay for itself. The effectiveness of the PTIP in carrying out the Trust's financial goals would be continually monitored and determinations made periodically about whether to modify the Plan.



Residents helping restore Tennessee Hollow habitat

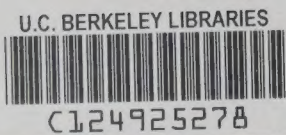
NEXT STEPS

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the draft Presidio Trust Implementation Plan (PTIP). The draft Plan is accompanied by a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that evaluates the potential environmental consequences of the Plan, as well as alternatives to the PTIP. These documents are available for public review and comment. You can find these documents at the Presidio Trust Library, the San Francisco Main Library, and other selected local libraries, or download them from the Presidio Trust's web site (www.presidiotrust.gov). You may request copies of the draft PTIP and EIS by contacting:

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Interested agencies and members of the public may submit written comments on the draft PTIP and EIS to the Presidio Trust during a 60-day comment period. Oral comments will also be accepted at two public hearings to be held on **September 11th** and **September 17th**. All comments will inform preparation of the final Plan and EIS. The final Plan and EIS will contain text changes necessary to respond to comments or to clarify aspects of the Plan and its environmental analysis. After distributing the final Plan and EIS, the Presidio Trust will prepare a Record of Decision, and the Trust's Board of Directors will adopt the Plan. Once adopted, the PTIP will serve as the basis for future decision-making for Area B of the Presidio. Additional site-specific plans and environmental analysis, as appropriate, will be prepared to carry out the Plan, with public input continuing as a valued component in planning the Presidio's future.





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